

SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

5 This invention relates to a semiconductor device comprising a plurality of functional elements arranged on a substrate.

Related Background Art

To date, thin film transistors prepared by using
an amorphous silicon thin film for functional elements
have a wide variety of applications as switching
devices including display devices such as liquid
crystal panels and organic EL panels as well as optical
sensor panels where they are used in combination with
PIN photodiodes comprising an amorphous silicon thin
film like TFT elements or photoelectric conversion
elements (to be referred to as optical sensor elements
hereinafter) such as MIS photocapacitors and TFT
optical sensors.

20 In recent years, efforts have been paid to develop
medical applications for optical sensor panels.

Particularly, indirect-type radiation imaging apparatus

... transform radioactive rays into visible light by mean ... directly or indirectly
read the obtained optical information by mean
optical sensor panel and direct type radiation imaging
apparatus comprising TFT devices and amorphous selenium

to directly transform radioactive rays into electric signals have been developed.

FIG. 15 shows an equivalent circuit diagram of an optical sensor panel comprising TFT elements and PIN photodiodes and FIG. 16 shows a schematic cross sectional view of such an optical sensor panel. In FIG. 15, reference numerals 1010, 1020 and 1030 respectively denote a PIN optical sensor, a TFT and a signal wire, whereas reference numerals 1040 and 1050 respectively denotes a TFT drive wire and a bias wire of the PIN optical sensor.

In FIG. 16, reference numerals 2010, 2020, 2030, 2040, 2050, 2060, 2070 and 2080 respectively denote a glass substrate, a gate wire, a gate insulating film, an i-type a-Si layer, an SiN layer, an n+ ohmic contact layer, a source/drain electrode and a sensor lower-electrode whereas reference numerals 2100, 2110, 2120 respectively denotes P-, I- and N-type a-Si layers. Reference numeral 2090 denotes a sensor upper-electrode and reference numeral 2130 denotes an SiN protection film.

The incoming beam that is carrying image information is subjected to photoelectric conversion by

the PIN optical sensor 1010. Subsequently, the charge is stored in a sensor capacity C1. Subsequently, when the TFT 1020 is turned on, the electric charge is distributed to a capacity C2 formed at the crossing of

the signal line 1030 and the TFT drive wire 1040 so that the change in the potential of the signal line 1030 is read and output.

Currently, improvements are required of the above-
5 described optical sensor panels in terms of substrate size and process precision in order to meet the demand for a larger display area and a higher degree of definition. However, any such improvements may inevitably entail a huge amount of investment in plant
10 and equipment and a long introductory pre-operational period so that doubts may be cast on such an idea.

In view of this problem, there have been proposed semiconductor devices adapted to produce a large display area by bonding a plurality of relatively small
15 panels. Such semiconductor devices may be realized by using existing plants and equipment for manufacturing small substrates.

FIG. 17 is a schematic perspective view of a radiation image reading apparatus having a large
20 display area and formed by bonding four optical sensor panels. FIG. 18 is a schematic cross sectional view of the device of FIG. 17. In FIG. 17, reference numerals 3010, 3020, 3050, 3060 and 3400 respectively denote an optical sensor panel, a base, a fluorescent panel, a
25 flexible substrate and

base 3020 is used to rigidly hold four optical sensor panels 3010 and

typically made of lead that absorbs radioactive rays and protects the electric components arranged therebelow. The sensor panels 3010 are bonded to the base 3020 by way of a first adhesive layer 3030, while 5 the fluorescent panel 3050 for transforming radioactive rays into visible light is bonded to the sensor panels 3010 by way of a second adhesive layer 3040. In FIG. 18, reference numeral 3070 denotes a printed substrate for driving the sensor panels and reference numeral 10 3060 denotes a flexible substrate for connecting the printed substrate 3070 and the sensor panels 3010.

In FIG. 18, there are also shown a cabinet 3200, a lid 3210, a cover 3230 typically made of lead and adapted to protect the electric components, feet 3240 15 for rigidly securing the printed substrate 3070 and angles 3250 firmly securing the base 3020 to the cabinet 3200. Note that the chassis 2400 comprises members denoted by 3200, 3250. A sensor unit is formed by firmly securing the radiation sensor 3300 within the 20 chassis.

However, when bonding a plurality of panels in a manner as described above, the precision level of the boundaries and that of the clearances separating them are of vital importance.

illustrating the boundaries of the panels. In FIG. 20,
P denotes the pitch of arrangement of pixels and P_c
denotes the distance between the centers of two pixels
that belong to different panels and are arranged
5 adjacently relative to each other. In general,
correction by way of image processing can properly be
carried out, when $P_c < 2P$ or the clearance between two
panels is made to be less than the size of one pixel.
In other words, each sensor panel has to be cut with a
10 margin of several tens of micrometers from the edges of
the pixels.

Any attempt for meeting the above requirement is
accompanied by the problems as listed below and can end
up with a poor manufacturing yield and a poor
15 performance unless they are solved to a satisfactory
extent.

1. Some of the pixels of an optical sensor panel
can be adversely affected by a cutting operation due to
problems such as chipping and/or displacement. Then,
20 the reliability of the sensor panel is lowered after
assembling. FIG. 21 is a schematic plan view of a cut
area of a sensor panel comprising a pixel 4010 and a
protection film 4020 typically made of SiN. In FIG.
21, 4030 denotes a notch formed typically by chipping

... seen from FIG. ... the protection film 4020 is
partly damaged by notches 4030. As a result, although

the sensor panel operates properly in the initial stages, it has been confirmed that its output fluctuates when it is subjected to high temperature and high humidity.

5 2. Pixels can be destructed by static electricity appearing in the course of assembling of the panels. Normally, insulating items such as glass substrates can become electrically charged with ease when peeled off in a vacuum chuck stage and/or scrubbed by blown air.

10 When the panel is just brought close to an object having an electric potential difference such as a grounded cabinet, an electric discharge occurs to destroy some or all of the pixels of the panel, particularly those arranged at the corners. Then, a

15 poor manufacturing yield can result.

3. A pixel of the assembled sensor panels can be destroyed along the cut edges, particularly at the corners, when static electricity is accumulated to 2 to 3kV in the course of handling the panels in the

20 assembling process.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the above identified problems, it is an object of the present invention to provide a

area of a narrowly margined panel with the circumferential space minimized can be manufactured

stably with a high yield.

More specifically, it is a first object of the present invention to provide a semiconductor device provided with a slice check wire for determining the acceptability of the operation of cutting the panels in order to ensure that the panels to be bonded are cut and bonded accurately, said slice check wire being located at a position with which reliability can be secured to electrically check any possible damages such as chippings to the protection film and other components produced in the cutting process in order to secure the reliability of the product after the assembling process.

A second object of the present invention is to provide a semiconductor device in which any electric cross talks are suppressed by fixing the electric potential of the slice check wire to a constant level.

A third object of the present invention is to provide a semiconductor device having an anti-charge feature for securing the stability and the reliability of the device, which can be achieved by electrically connecting the slice check wire to the drive wires of TFTs or the bias wires of the optical sensor in order to improve the resistance against electrostatic

potential of the slice check wire to a constant level.

According to the invention, the above objects are

achieved by providing a semiconductor device comprising
a TFT substrate having a plurality of pixels of a
plurality of TFT (thin film transistors) provided on
the substrate, slice lines for cutting the TFT
5 substrate being arranged along the periphery of said
TFT substrate, peripheral wires being arranged between
said slice lines and said TFT substrate.

Preferably, said peripheral wires are connected to
at least the drive wires or the signal wires of said
10 TFTs. Preferably, each pixel of said TFT substrate
comprises a TFT element and a photoelectric conversion
element and said peripheral wires are electrically
connected to the bias wires of the photoelectric
conversion element.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic circuit diagram of an
equivalent circuit of a first embodiment of the
invention.

20 FIGS. 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D and 2E are schematic cross
sectional views of the panel section of the first
embodiment of the invention including TFTs and
photoelectric convesion elements, illustrating
different manufacturing steps.

central part of the four bonded panels of the first
embodiment, illustrating the boundaries of the panels.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged schematic plan view of one of the panels of the first embodiment, illustrating a corner thereof.

FIG. 5 is a schematic plan view of bonded panels
5 of a second embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 6 is a schematic plan view of a single panel of the second embodiment.

FIG. 7 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of a third embodiment.

10 FIG. 8 is a schematic circuit diagram of another equivalent circuit of the third embodiment.

FIG. 9 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of the third embodiment, illustrating the electric potential of the peripheral area of the driver for driving a TFT.

FIG. 10 is a schematic partial plan view of the third embodiment, illustrating the connection between TFT drive wires.

FIG. 11 is a schematic cross sectional view of the third embodiment taken along line 11-11 in FIG. 10.

FIG. 12 is a schematic partial plan view of the third embodiment, illustrating the connection between a TFT drive wire.

FIG. 13 is a schematic cross sectional view of the

FIG. 14 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of a fourth embodiment of the

invention.

FIG. 15 is a schematic plan view of a known optical sensor.

FIG. 16 is a schematic cross sectional view of a
5 known PIN optical sensor.

FIG. 17 is a schematic perspective view of a known radiation image reading apparatus.

FIG. 18 is a schematic cross sectional view of the known radiation image reading apparatus of FIG. 17.

10 FIG. 19 is a schematic plan view of bonded panels.

FIG. 20 is an enlarged schematic plan view of a central part of the bonded panels of FIG. 19.

FIG. 21 is a schematic plan view of a cut area of a sensor panel.

15 FIG. 22 is a schematic illustration of a system using a semiconductor device according to the invention for an X-ray examination apparatus.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

20 Now, the present invention will be described in greater detail by referring to the accompanying drawings that illustrate preferred embodiment of the invention.

(First Embodiment)

According to the invention there will be described which comprises TFT elements and MIS optical sensors and are

applied to a radiation image reading apparatus. FIG. 1 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of a first embodiment of the invention. In FIG. 1, reference numerals 11, 12 and 13 respectively denote a driver for driving a TFT, a signal processing amplifier and another driver for driving an MIS optical sensor.

5 FIG. 1 also shows MIS sensors C11 through C35, TFTs T11 through T35, TFT drive wires Vg1 through Vg3, signal wires Sig1 through Sig5 and bias wires Vs1 and Vs2.

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The MIS optical sensors C11 through C35 are provided to receive optical signals to be applied to the bias wires Vs1 and Vs2 from the driver 13. The electric charges of each optical signal is stored in the MIS optical sensor. The accumulated electric charges are then sequentially read out by the TFTs (T11 through T35) by way of the signal lines Sig1 through Sig5 and the signal processing amplifier. The TFTs are sequentially turned on/off by signals applied thereto by the TFT driver 11 by way of the TFT drive wires Vg1 through Vg3. In FIG. 1, Sc denotes a slice check wire whose electric potential is held to the ground level by the TFT driver and the MIS optical sensor driver.

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Now, the preparing steps of the embodiment will be briefly described by referring to FIGS. 2A through 2E,

Sensor panel.

(1) As shown in FIG. 2A, a Cr film is formed on a

glass substrate 101 to a thickness of 1,000Å by sputtering and then lower electrodes 102 of the MIS optical sensors, gate electrodes 103 and gate wires 104 of the TFTs, slice lines for cutting the panel and 5 slice check wire are provided there by means of a patterning operation.

(2) Then, as shown in FIG. 2B, a silicon nitride (SiN) film 105, an amorphous silicon (Si) film 106, an ohmic (n+) layer 107 are successively formed by plasma CVD to respective thicknesses of 3,000Å, 5,000Å and 10 1,000Å and then contact holes 108 for connecting the lower electrodes of the MIS optical sensors and the TFTS-D electrodes and those for drawing wires are provided typically by CDE.

15 (3) Thereafter, as shown in FIG. 2C, an aluminum (Al) film is formed by sputtering to a thickness of 1µm and TFTS-D electrodes 109, signal lines 110 and bias wires 111 of the optical sensors are formed there by way of wet etching.

20 (4) Subsequently, as shown in FIG. 2D, the ohmic (n+) layer 107 at the TFT gap is removed by means of RIE to form a TFT channel 112.

(5) Then, as shown in FIG. 2E, the panel is processed for element isolation and a silicon nitride CVD to a thickness of 9,000Å. Thereafter, openings are formed therethrough for the pads of the drawn wires

typically by RIE.

As a result of the above steps, a single panel is produced and then checked for any defects to determine if the panel is acceptable or not, thereby completing
5 the early stage of the process.

Then, in the middle stage of the process, the components of the optical sensor panel are electrically mounted.

(6) Polyimide is applied by spin coating and then
10 cured by heat. Subsequently, the panel is cut along the slice lines to predetermined dimensions.

(7) The conductivity of the slice check wire is examined.

(8) Electric connections including TAB connections
15 and PCB connections are established and subsequently the slice check wire is checked again for electric conductivity.

With the above steps, modules to be bonded together are produced. Then, in the final stage of the
20 process, they are assembled to produce a large panel.

(9) The panels are bonded to the base and then a fluorescent panel is bonded thereto. Thereafter, an Al sheet is bonded.

(10) The resulting assembly is housed in a cabinet

and the entire assembly is examined.

Thus, a complete semiconductor device to be used for a radiation image reading apparatus is produced.

Since the risk of damage due to static electricity is reduced after connecting the drivers, the slice check wire may be cut and removed after mounting the drivers in position, although it may be left there if it does 5 not give rise to any problem.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged schematic plan view of a central part of the four bonded panels of the first embodiment, illustrating the boundaries of the panels. The pixel size of this embodiment is 160 μm . In FIG. 3, 10 the center of pixel refers to the center of gravity of the optical sensor, which agrees with the optical center of the pixel. Therefore, so far as the distance separating the centers of any two adjacently located pixels of two adjacent panels is smaller than the size 15 of two pixels or 320 μm , the area to be used for the bonding can be increased so that the panels can be cut safely. This can be achieved when the centers of the optical sensors are positioned toward the center of the bonded panels by appropriately arranging TFTs. With 20 this embodiment, the distance separating the pixel regions of two adjacent panels can be increased from 160 μm to 188 μm or 202 μm .

FIG. 4 is an enlarged schematic plan view of one of the panels of the first embodiment, illustrating a

slice line 41 and a slice check wire 42, respectively, and point "a" denotes an SiN protection film, whereas

shows the center of gravity of the pixel.

The SiN protection file 43 is separated from the edges of the pixel by 25 μm and the slice check wire 42 is arranged in the SiN protection film with the minimal width to secure its performance in a reliability test under high temperature/high humidity. The panel is sliced so as to cut off the slice lines. Note that the slice liens are separated from the corresponding respective edges of the SiN protection film by 45 μm to provide a margin for accommodating it to any displacement of chipping or slicing. The margins are made free from the SiN protection film, because, if cracks appear in the SiN protection film, they can be extended to the pixel.

How, the slice check line of this embodiment is used will be discussed below. As pointed out above, if the SiN protection film is damaged by any unexpected displacement due to slicing or chipping, the slice check line can also be damaged. However, by checking electric conductivity by means a pad Cp arranged on the slice check wire shown in FIG. 1, any abnormal condition of the panel is detected so that any defective sensor panels can be prevented from being mingled with good ones.

detect defective devices if compared with conventional visual examination processes. Additionally, it is also

possible to examine each device by means of the slice
check wire at significant points in the subsequent
steps so that absolutely no defective devices may be
detected after bonding a plurality of optical sensor
5 panels for each device.

Particularly, since pixel destructions due to
static electricity can occur anytime until the TFT
driver and the photoelectric conversion element driver
are mounted and become electrically operable, the
10 examination using the slice check wire may have to be
repeated until that time.

While the above embodiment is described in terms
of TFTs used as functional elements, the present
invention is by no means limited thereto and the TFTs
15 may be replaced by diodes or thin film diodes.

(Second Embodiment)

While the circuits for driving the elements of the
first embodiment are arranged only on one side of the
substrate, this embodiment is provided with drive
20 circuits arranged on both sides of the panel in order
to perform a high speed drive operation. In this
embodiment, a pair of sensor panels are bonded
together. FIG. 5 is a schematic plan view of the panel
section of a second embodiment of the invention,

reference numerals 101, 102 denotes respective sensor
panels and reference numeral 103 denotes an amplifier

side leading wire connected to an amplifier IC, whereas reference numeral 104 denotes a driver side leading wire connected to a driver IC. For each of the sensor panels of this embodiment, a driver side leading wire 5 is arranged on each side of the panel to realize a high speed drive operation.

As in the case of the first embodiment, after a slice check wire is arranged along the periphery of the TFT substrate and cut at the slice lines, it is 10 possible to check the electric conductivity to detect any defective device. If a single sensor panel has dimensions sufficiently large for forming a semiconductor device, no bonding operation is required and hence the drivers may be arranged on both sides of 15 the panel. If it is desirable to locate the pixel region extremely near the chassis, a single sensor panel is used in which the cutting section is arranged in the direction that is required. Then, pixels may be read in areas close to the chassis. FIG. 6 is a schematic plan view of the panel section of the second 20 embodiment realized by using a single panel. In FIG. 6, there are shown a signal reading circuit 105, a sensor drive circuit 106 and a chassis 107. As seen from FIG. 6, it is possible to arrange a peripheral

in the region close to the chassis.

While the above embodiment is described in terms

of TFTs used as functional elements, the present invention is by no means limited thereto and the TFTs may be replaced by diodes or thin film diodes.

(Third Embodiment)

5 The third embodiment of semiconductor device is applied to a radiation image reading apparatus and comprises TFT elements and MIS photoelectric conversion elements. FIG. 7 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of the second embodiment. In FIG. 10 7, reference numeral 11 denotes a TFT driver and reference numeral 12 denotes a signal processing amplifier, whereas reference numeral 13 denotes an MIS photoelectric conversion element driver.

In this embodiment, wires Vs1, Vs2, which are bias 15 wires of optical sensors, are connected to each other by way of resistance Rvs. Additionally, TFT drive wires Vg1 through Vg3 are connected to each other by way of resistance Rs, while wires Vs1 and Vg1 are connected to each other by way of resistance Rv. Slice 20 check wire Sc is connected to wire Vs4 by way of resistance Rvc and to wire Vg1 by way of resistance Rgc. Alternatively, it may be connected to the signal lines or only to the TFT drive wires as shown in FIG. 8. While not shown, it is also possible to connect it

If the resistance between the TFT driver and the first TFT is set to Ro and the resistance between the

Vg wires is set to R_s , a resistance with which the ON voltage V_{gh} applied to the Vg wires does not affect any adjacent lines may be selected for the resistance R_s . Note that the adjacent lines are held to the OFF 5 voltage V_{gl} .

FIG. 9 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of the second embodiment, illustrating the electric potential of the peripheral area of the driver for driving a TFT. Referring to 10 FIG. 9, the adjacent lines can be held OFF if the potential V_a of point "a" is lower than the threshold voltage V_{th} of the TFTs.

$$V_{th} > V_a = V_{gl} + (V_{gh} - V_{gl}) \times R_o / (R_s + 2R_o) \quad (1)$$
$$R_s > R_o (V_{gl} - V_{th} - 2V_{th}) / (V_{th} - V_{gl})$$

15 Since $V_{gl} = -5V$, $V_{gh} = 15V$, $V_{th} = 2V$ and $R_o = 100\Omega$; then $R_s > 86\Omega$.

Similarly, as for the resistance R_v , since $V_{sh} = 9V$ at the time when the bias wires V_s of the optical sensors are used to read light, $V_{sh} - V_{gl} = 15V$ in comparison with $V_{gh} - V_{gl} = 20V$ above. Thus, any failure of the TFTs can be prevented by driving the V_s wires if at least $R_v > R_s$. If fluctuations of the V_s potential are to be held within the range in which no problem is caused with respect to the performance, they

to satisfy $R_v > 100 + R_o$. In this embodiment, it is satisfied if $R_v > 10k\Omega$. As for R_{vs} , in order that

fluctuations of the bias voltage of the optical sensors are less than 1%, Rvs need to statify $R_{VS} > 100 \times R_o$.

Furthermore, if $V_{G1} = 0V$ in formula (1) above, the connection resistance R_{GC} between the Sc wire, or the slice check wire, and the V_{G1} wire is equal to 550Ω , or $R_{GC} = 550\Omega$. Fluctuations of the bias voltage of the optical sensors can be held less than 1% if the connection resistance R_{VS} between the Sc wire and the V_{S4} wire is greater than $100 \times R_o$, or $R_{VS} > 100 \times R_o$.

In this embodiment, any related wires can be connected by way of an ohmic ($n+$) layer. A standard value of $1M\Omega$ is selected to provide each resistance with an enough margin.

FIG. 10 is a schematic partial plan view of the third embodiment, illustrating how V_g wires are connected. In FIG. 10, reference numerals 51 and 52 respectively denote an Al wire and a Cr wire, whereas reference numerals 53 and 54 respectively denote a contact hole and an $n+$ connecting wire.

When connecting the V_g wires by way of an $n+$ layer, the Al wires are connected to the respective Cr wires by way of respective contact holes in order to reduce the wire resistance of the V_g wires in the areas other than the pixel region. The Al wires are

connected to the $n+$ layer by way of the Cr wires.

FIG. 11 is a schematic cross sectional view of the third embodiment taken along line 11-11 in FIG. 10. In

FIG. 11, reference numerals 58 and 55 respectively denotes a glass substrate and a gate insulating film and reference numerals 56 and 57 respectively denotes a semiconductor layer and an n+ ohmic contact layer. In this embodiment, the n+ layer is made to have a thickness of 1,000Å as in the case of Embodiment 1 and has a sheet resistance of 100k Ω /□. Since the pitch of pixel arrangement is 160 μ m, the value of 1M Ω can be achieved by using ten or more than ten sheets.

In this embodiment, any wires are connected with a clearance of 10 μ m. Similarly, the Vs wires are connected by way of an n+ layer.

Now, the technique of connecting a Vg wire and a slice check wire will be described below. FIG. 12 is a schematic partial plan view of the third embodiment, illustrating how a TFT drive wire and a slice check wire are connected. The slice check wire that is a Cr wire is connected to the Vg wire by way of a contact hole. FIG. 13 is a schematic cross sectional view of the third embodiment taken along line 13-13 in FIG. 12. The Vg wire 51 and the slice check line 52 are connected by way of contact hole 53. Here again, the n+ layer is so drawn as to make the wire resistance equal to 1M Ω . The slice check wire may be cut and

the photoelectric conversion element drive wires after checking the conductivity of the slice check line or

simply left there if it does not interfere with the operation of the related elements by appropriately adjusting the connection area.

While the above embodiment is described in terms
5 of TFTs used as functional elements, the present invention is by no means limited thereto and the TFTs may be replaced by diodes or thin film diodes.

(Fourth Embodiment)

Now the fourth embodiment of the invention will be
10 described. In this embodiment, the slice check line and the Vs wires are connected without specifically providing any resistance. FIG. 14 is a schematic circuit diagram of an equivalent circuit of a fourth embodiment of the invention. In this embodiment, the
15 Vs4 wire and the slice check wire Sc are connected in the same layer, although they may be alternatively arranged in different layers and connected between the different layers. Still alternatively, the Vs1 or Vs2 wire may be connected to the Sc wire. In this
20 embodiment, the electric conductivity of the slice check wire is checked with a pad Cp for conductivity check to check defectives after cutting the panels, so that the slice check wire may be firmly held to a constant potential which is not the ground potential,

against damages due to static electricity.

The present invention is also effective for

narrowing the margins of liquid crystal panels. A liquid crystal panel is prepared by arranging a pair of glass substrates, forming elements on the substrates, cutting the substrates to desired dimensions,

5 subsequently bonding the substrates and pouring liquid crystal in the space between the substrates. Then, electric components including drivers are mounted therein. Therefore, in the case of a liquid crystal again, defective products can be prevented from being

10 mingled with good ones by connecting the slice check wire to the drive wires and examining the electric conductivity of the slice check wire. Additionally, the pixels can be protected against damages due to static electricity by connecting the TFT control lines

15 to the slice check wire. Since normally a pair of substrates are bonded together and liquid crystal is poured into the gaps separating the substrates in the process of manufacturing liquid crystal panels, the conductivity check may be conducted either before or

20 after bonding the substrates. For a liquid crystal panel, it is not necessary to keep the potential of the slice check wire constantly to the same level.

While the above embodiment is described in terms of TFTs used as functional elements, the present

may be replaced by diodes or thin film diodes.

(Fifth Embodiment)

FIG. 22 is a schematic illustration of a system

using a semiconductor device according to the invention for an X-ray examination apparatus.

Referring to FIG. 22, X-rays 6060 generated by an X-ray tube 6050 are made to be transmitted through the chest 6062 of a patient or subject 6061, and enter the photoelectric converter 6040 provided on the surface with a fluorescent substance. For apparatus in which a substance (e.g. GaAs) having sensibility to radioactive rays such as X-ray is employed, however, the apparatus can sense radioactive rays and can be used as a radiation detection apparatus without providing a wavelength converter such as a fluorescent substance. The incoming X-rays contain information of the interior of the patient 6061. The fluorescent substance emits light as a function of the incoming X-rays and the photoelectric converter 6040 converts the emitted light into electric information, which is digitized and processed by an image processor 6070 so that it can be observed on a display 6080 in the control room.

The obtained information can be transferred to a remote site by way of an appropriate transmission means such as a telephone wire 6090 so that it may be displayed on a display 6081 in a doctor room of the remote site or stored in a storage means such as an

can diagnose the patient. The information may also be recorded on a film 6110 by means of a film processor 6100.